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It must be remembered that in a land where only the eldest son marries and all the younger sons are celibate, a sonless land-owner naturally has no relations in the male line to adopt.

d.—Where there is a childless widow.

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If a man dies childless, his widow first marries his younger brother. Failing him, she may marry any man of her husband's got. But the land is considered her property till she has borne a son, who, on attaining his majority, steps into the *khang khlen*.

Cremation.

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Coffins are not used in Spiti for want of wood. Corpses are carried in a sitting posture to the burning-ground either on a man's shoulder or in a blanket held by four men.

II.

Social Ideas.

Asceticism.

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Hermits exist and are said to subsist on nothing but tea and one morning meal.

Excommunication.

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A man can be excommunicated for eating with a man or cohabiting with a woman of lower caste than himself. The decision is announced by public proclamation.

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The *lamas* taking no part in this, but they turn out a *lama* who misbehaves himself and he is never taken back in any circumstances.

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An excommunicated layman can be received back into caste after ceremonies. He has to read a book on *shakpa* or penitential offerings, burn a lamp in front of a *deota*, feast the *lamas*, and may be ordered to make 100 or 1,000 prostrations before some *deota* in a monastery.

Leprosy.

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Leprosy is found in one village in Spiti, ascribed to the water of a spring, wherein lives a devil, *Chutalwa*.

If a man passes the spring on a day when the devil happens to be present, he is liable to get leprosy.

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A leper is not allowed to marry, but if married, he is not separated from his wife. He feeds by himself in a separate room and the villagers will not eat with him.

Beyond the High Himalayas

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778 As the lamas passed this scroll, I heard them mutter, "Om Mani
531 Padme Hoom."

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782 To the center of the main chapel is an altar covered with bowls
filled with water and cereals. They are offerings to various gods.
For the sake of prosperity, they are supposed always to be filled.
I met the lama who attends them, a scraggy, barefooted man, and
as he passed the altar I heard him mutter, "Om Mani Padme
Hoom."

There are thirteen large urns at Hemis, about four or five feet
tall and three feet wide. They are filled each year with yak butter
by some friend or benefactor, and lighted wicks stand in the
middle. Each urn is supposed to burn a year. If the flame goes
out, it is bad luck. The lama who had the main urn under his sur-
veillance hovered near, wrapped in a soiled, red robe. As I went
by I heard him murmur, "Om Mani Padme Hoom."

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788 In the center of an adjoining chapel is a life-size statue of
Buddha, where the devout bow in worship, murmuring, "Om
Mani Padme Hoom."

- 785 Around Buddha are images of lesser deities and of Incarnate
Lamas. There is one of Stagtsang Raspa, founder of Hemis. There
is one of Mila Repa, the famous Tibetan poet who lived for eighty-
three years and attained Buddhahood in that span even though
[754] his early life was sinful. He had learned how to kill people by
magic and for a while walked the path of darkness. Then he did
penance under a Lobon (Guru) by the name of Marpa. Marpa
made him build a house of stone, then tear it down and carry the
stones back to where he had found them. He did this over and
again, one time building and tearing down a house nine stories
high. Marpa beat Mila Repa and gave him impossible chores to
do in penance for his sins. Finally Marpa gave him the Initiation
and the Teachings, and launched Mila Repa on a life of mortifica-
tion of the body. He became a hermit in a cave on a high moun-
tain, where he lived on nettles. He renounced food, clothing, and

Om Mani Padme Hoom

speech. He pondered on the lives of the saints, the causes and 785 •
effects of actions, the ends of worldly existence.

This poet-saint is loved in all Ladakh. His strong face, carved
in stone, looks down on the inhabitants of Hemis. It shows tremendous concentration and an indomitable will. All who pass [788]
Mila Repa's statue at Hemis murmur, "*Om Mani Padme Hoom*."

One day while Mila Repa was moving to a new cave high on a
shoulder of Mount Everest his only worldly possession, an earthen
pot, broke. The loss was welcomed, not deplored. And Mila Repa,
the poet, wrote:

*The earthen pot now is, and now is not.
My sole possession.
By breaking it has become a lama,
For it has preached an admirable discourse
On the impermanence of things.*

And near the end of his life he wrote:

*May the prayer regarding the death of this beggar
Be fulfilled for the benefit of all beings.
In a rocky cave in an uninhabited country
There will my mind be fully content.*

The Buddhist world is filled with legends of Mila Repa. There 538
is the story of the frightened deer being pursued by a dog and a 788
hunter. The deer, crossing a ridge, saw Mila Repa in his cave and
heard him chanting, "*Om Mani Padme Hoom, Om Mani Padme
Hoom*." The deer paused to listen and was so spellbound by the
spiritual vibrations that its fears were forgotten. Shortly it lay
down beside Mila Repa, serene and relaxed in the spiritual atmosphere of the place.

Along came the dog, who, seeing the deer, whirled to the attack. Then the dog heard Mila Repa chanting, "*Om Mani Padme Hoom, Om Mani Padme Hoom*." The dog stopped and listened; it too became calm and serene, and shortly lay down beside the deer.

W. Tibetans AJ4

THE TREK THROUGH LADEKH TO LEH 203

I can well imagine the shock any high-minded Englishman or woman must suffer after they have been reminded, as I was by the Head Lama, that it is known that when Julius Caesar first went to England, he discovered that polyandry was a common practice in the country. 000

If there are more than three brothers, unless the wife is prepared to cope with extra husbands, then those remaining have the choice of either becoming a lama and entering the monastery or becoming a coolie; unless of course one is born fortunate enough to catch the eye of an heiress. 595 793

These lamas who are both male and female, usually remain single, though there is no bar against their marriage. The women lamas or nuns, known as chamos, live in different buildings, but they do not live entirely separate from each other, the nuns undertaking many of the household duties in the monasteries, such as baking bread, cooking and so on. 793

It is not unknown for a family to dedicate their first born, or even the favourite son to this religious life. In that event he is sent to a monastery school—which is residential—from the age of eight years, passing through all the stages of pupil, probationer and finally fully ordained monk. As such he has to observe some two hundred and fifty-three vows, and monastic life—at least of the yellow order—imposes a hard discipline upon the monks, including celibacy and abstinence. His diet consists of barley, wheat or buckwheat and occasionally rice. The only meat allowed to be eaten is either sheep, goat or yak, and the chief beverages are soup, milk and tea. 793 785

In every village we had passed through we had seen belonging to practically every house a little boy wearing a lama's hat or a little girl wearing the cap of a chamo. They had been dedicated as the one of the family to enter the monastery or nunnery school as soon as they were old enough. 793

The monks, in addition to being divided into sects, are separated into two classes; one, those who would in any event have entered the monastery, devote their time to meditation, prayers and the spiritual side "their life being on a higher spiritual plane", and two, those who beg for alms, cultivate the land, look after the rents and so on. The doctors among them—those I met anyway,—had started in the first class and then 12627